

REVIEW

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OF

THE MASSACHUSETTS PROPOSITION

FOR

ABOLISHING THE SLAVE REPRESENTATION.

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# REVIEW

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## THE MASSACHUSETTS PROPOSITION

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ABOLISHING THE SLAVE REPRESENTATION.

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This proposition to destroy one of the fundamental compromises of the Constitution, originated apparently from a petition sent to the Legislature of Massachusetts during the session of 1842-'43, and signed by more than 65,000 persons who asked,

1st. That a law should be passed, (by the Legislature of Massachusetts,) forbidding all persons who hold office under the government of Massachusetts, from aiding or abetting the arrest or detention of any person who may be claimed as a fugitive from slavery.

2dly. That a law should be passed, forbidding the use of the jails, or other public property of the State for the detention of any such person.

3dly. That such amendments in the Constitution of the United States be proposed by the Legislature of Massachusetts, to the other States of the Union, as may have the effect of *forever separating the people of Massachusetts from all connexion with slavery.*

The State of Massachusetts, having long since abolished the institution of slavery, and the people of that commonwealth having no connexion with it, except through the political relations existing between the several States composing our Confederacy, this petition must be understood as expressing a wish to see such alterations made in the Constitution of the United States, as would inevitably cause the abolition of slavery throughout the Union. The petition was referred to a joint committee of the Massachusetts Senate and House of Representatives, and subsequently, an elaborate report was introduced by the chairman, Mr. Charles Francis Adams. The Report shows, that the Committee were much embarrassed as to the character of the amendments which they should suggest, but after due deliberation, they recommended that the Legislature of Massachusetts, should submit to Congress a proposition for abolishing the slave representation.

The Committee acknowledge, that the change proposed "will not of itself, even if adopted by the requisite number of States, effect the purpose intended by the petitioners. There are several passages of the Constitution, besides that fixing the basis of representation, which connect the free States with slavery. They are, however, of secondary consequence, when compared with that, and as *they draw their vitality from, so they would die*

*with it.* \* \* \* The withdrawal from the Constitution of the slave representation would alone, in the opinion of your Committee, be of force enough to carry with it the *remaining obstacles to that complete and effective separation from all connexion with slavery* which the petitioners desire."

The ulterior views, and the consummation so devoutly wished, are here disclosed without reserve. It is evident that the annihilation of the slave representation was urged, not as an end—not as an object desirable *per se* only, but as a means to attain an end, which end is no less than the abolition of slavery throughout the United States. The Legislature of Massachusetts sanctioned the recommendation of the Committee, and the proposition was submitted to Congress by Mr. John Quincy Adams. It was referred to a committee of the House of Representatives, and Messrs. Adams and Giddings made a Report in behalf of the minority, sustaining the proposition of Massachusetts and inveighing with great severity against the qualified representation of slave property. If acrimonious and unsparing denunciation of that provision of the Constitution which authorizes the representation of the slave population, could convince the public mind and obliterate this feature of the Constitution, then Messrs. Adams and Giddings might indulge confident hopes of success, but it remains to be seen, whether the people of the United States will endanger the existence of the Union and the peace of the country by any effort to propitiate the abolitionists.

Although the Massachusetts proposition found but few advocates in Congress, the signs of the times indicate very plainly, that the abolitionists will continue to urge this innovation upon the attention of Congress and the country, and therefore we trust to be indulged in giving it a brief notice.

A reference to the origin of the slave representation as a mere proposition, and its subsequent incorporation into the Federal Constitution, will show the principles upon which it was founded. It appeared first during the discussion of the articles of confederation in the Congress of 1776. One of those articles declared, that "all charges of war, and all other expenses that shall be incurred for the common defence and allowed by the United States assembled, shall be defrayed out of a common treasury, which shall be supplied by the several colonies in proportion to the number of inhabitants of every age, sex, and quality, except Indians not paying taxes, in each colony." The article exempted none from taxation "except Indians." It included the slave as well as the free man. During the debate, Mr. Chase, of Maryland, moved that the quotas should be paid, not by the inhabitants as just indicated, but by the number of "white inhabitants." He argued that negroes were property to the South, and cattle were property to the North: that the Southern planter laid out his surplus profits in negroes, and the Northern farmer his in cattle and horses, and that it would be no more unjust to tax the latter than the former. The debate was continued by Mr. John Adams; and Mr. Harrison, of Virginia, by way of compromise, proposed that two slaves should be counted as one freeman.

The question being taken on the amendment offered by Mr. Chase, it was rejected: Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina being in the affirmative, and in favor of a basis of "free white inhabitants;" and New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania voting against the amendment, and in favor of a basis of taxation including all persons, of "every age, sex, and quality," and of course, slaves. Georgia was divided. (1st vol. of the Madison papers.) Subsequently the basis of "lands, buildings and improve-

ments" was incorporated among the articles of confederation, but this plan proved unacceptable to the people of Massachusetts, as Mr. Gorham of that State "represented, in strong terms, the inequality and clamors that had been produced by the valuation of lands," and said that it "was weakening the ties of the Union among the States." The subject was again discussed and several propositions submitted as to the ratio which the slaves should bear to the free inhabitants. At length, Mr. Madison proposed that they should be rated as five to three in the rule of apportionment, and ultimately this plan prevailed *without opposition*. The property basis was abandoned, and the basis as existing in the present Constitution was agreed to by general consent. In the Federal Convention of 1787, the same subject in reference to taxation was discussed in conjunction with the question of representation. To trace the successive steps which led to the adoption of the third clause of article I, section 2, of the Federal Constitution, would, on this occasion, be unnecessary. In adopting it, the Convention acted upon the theory, that the number of persons, without regard to "age, sex, or condition," was the true index of the productive power of a State, its wealth and capacity to pay taxes: and upon the great maxim, that taxation ought not to exist without representation, a maxim upon which the American revolution turned.

No morbid philanthropy or fanatical frenzy animated the members of the Federal Convention, but guided by the spirit of patriotism, they anxiously sought to advance and secure the permanent interest of the whole Union. Their wisdom is attested by their work. Mr. Madison felt it his duty to express his "profound and solemn conviction, derived from an intimate opportunity of observing and appreciating the views of the Convention, collectively and individually, that there never was an assembly of men, charged with a great and arduous trust, who were more pure in their motives, or more exclusively devoted to the object of devising and proposing a constitutional system which should *best secure the permanent liberty and happiness of their country*." Without denying the abstract truths of the Declaration of Independence, or vainly attempting to equalize the condition of mankind, they considered the diversity of our population—the pursuits of the different classes—the varied products of the several States, their conflicting interests and views, and then devised that Constitution, by the operation of which the United States have so greatly prospered during the last half a century.\* "The structure," (said a distinguished jurist of Massachusetts,) "has been erected by architects of consummate skill and fidelity; its foundations are solid; its compartments are beautiful, as well as useful; its arrangements are full of wisdom and order; and its defences are impreg-

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\* "All discussions, on the excellence of government merely on abstract principles and without reference to the given circumstances, are futile. The science of government is no more an abstract one than architecture. The architect, without knowledge of pure mechanics and mathematics in general, will make but a poor bungler, yet it is of primary importance to him before he can either draw the plan of a building or take any specific measure, to know what materials he has at his disposal, whether wood, bricks, or marble, the climate which will operate on them, the ground on which he has to build, and the object for which the building is intended. So has the statesman to acquaint himself thoroughly with ethics, natural law, and philosophy in general, yet he must not forget his materials when he comes to the practical question, nor the object of his society.—Lieber's Political Ethics, vol. 1st.

"All government is founded on compromise: We balance inconveniences; we give and take; we remit some rights, that we may enjoy others; and we choose rather to be happy citizens than subtle disputants. As we must give away some natural liberty, to enjoy civil advantages; so we must sacrifice some civil liberties, for the advantages to be derived from the communion and fellowship of a great empire."—Burke's Works, vol. 1st.

nable from without. It has been reared for immortality, if the work of man may justly aspire to such a title. It may, nevertheless, perish in an hour by the folly, or corruption, or negligence of its only keepers, *the people*.\*

Appealing from the present inhabitants of Massachusetts to their ancestors of the Revolution, let us see in what estimation the latter regarded the Federal Constitution, when it was submitted for the ratification or rejection of their State Convention. It is proper to refer occasionally to the earlier and purer days of the Republic, and to observe the course of those who so sedulously sought to secure and maintain the reserved rights of the States, as well as the union of the States.

Mr. King said, "It is a principle of this Constitution, that representation and taxation should go hand in hand. This paragraph states, that the number of free persons, including those bound to service for a term of years and excluding Indians not taxed, three-fifths of all other persons shall be computed in ascertaining the number of representatives. These persons are the *slaves*. By this rule are representation and taxation to be apportioned. And it was adopted *because it was the language of all America*."†

Judge Dana concluded, "from a survey of *every* part of the Constitution, that it was the best that the wisdom of men could suggest."

Mr. Dawes said, "he was very sorry to hear the paragraph under consideration objected to. He thought the objection unfounded; that the *black inhabitants* of the Southern States must be considered either as slaves, and as so much property, or in the character of so many freemen; if the former, why should they not be wholly represented? Our own State laws and constitutions would lead us to consider these blacks as freemen, and so indeed would our own ideas of natural justice. If, then, they are freemen, they might form an equal basis for representation as though they were all white inhabitants. *In either view*, therefore, he could not see that the Northern States would suffer, but *directly to the contrary*."

Mr. Gorham "thought the proposed section much in favor of Massachusetts." So highly was the Constitution eulogised, that a member of the Convention, (Mr. Randall,) said "in praise of it, we hear the reverend clergy, the judges of the supreme court, and the ablest lawyers exerting their utmost abilities." Among the ayes upon the question of ratification, are the names of Gorham, Dana, Cushing, Winthrop, Bowdoin, John Hancock, Samuel Adams, and many others of the most eminent men then living in Massachusetts. In ratifying the Constitution, the Convention proposed nine distinct amendments to the Federal Constitution. Did the Convention object to the representation of slaves, and propose to alter the Constitution in this respect? No, but the convention proposed, as an amendment, that "it be explicitly declared, that all powers, not expressly delegated by the aforesaid Constitution, are *reserved to the several States, to be by them exercised*."<sup>‡</sup>

The people of the Northern States have, from time to time, spoken of the representation of the slaves as a grievance, and a concession to the South on the part of the North. Among others, Mr. Justice Story, of Massachusetts, in his commentaries upon the Constitution, intimates that it is injurious to the non-slave-holding States. It is obvious to every one, that the arrangement is based upon no precise principle, but is a compromise between conflicting opinions and interests. If any concession was made, it

\* Story.

†2nd vol. Elliott's Debates.

‡Elliott, vol. 2.

was made by the South to the interests and views of the North. When the Constitution was formed, the doctrine prevailed universally in this country, that taxation should be apportioned to representation. Sovereign States would not have united upon any other principle. Had a different rule been adopted, the smaller and weaker States would have been liable to oppression on the part of the more powerful States of the confederacy. New Jersey and Delaware, for example, with their few representatives, would not have agreed to be liable to be taxed twice or thrice as high as New York and Pennsylvania, which had a larger number of representatives. A few of the larger States might have coalesced and imposed oppressive taxes on such property as might be peculiar to some of the smaller States of the Union. The slaves not being diffused throughout the country, but confined to certain States, would have been liable to unequal and excessive taxation. The apportionment of taxation according to representation, interposed a check and furnished a restraint against unequal demands to supply the national treasury, and without this safeguard and security, the slave-holding States would never have ratified the Constitution.

It may be true, that *property* is the most equitable rule of taxation, but it is so difficult to discover the actual amount of property held by each individual, that the practical application of the rule is attended with a great many difficulties. Population affords a tolerably correct index of national wealth, the products of industry being measured generally by the number of inhabitants. The productions of some of the States were raised by free labor; the productions of others by slave-labor. The several States were bound to furnish to the common treasury an amount to be ascertained by the number of people in each State. Of what importance is it whether the sum required, be made by the labor of freemen or negro slaves? Each State was at liberty to form its own domestic and internal regulations, without the control or interference of the co-States. According to the usages prevalent among independent and sovereign States, no State had a right to ask its co-States, from what species of labor they were enabled to pay their proportion of the public burdens. The States severally possessed the right to demand, that each should contribute in proportion to population, but further they had no right to go.

The views of John Adams as expressed in the Congress of Confederation are so just that they deserve attention on account of their bearing upon this subject. He remarked, "that the numbers of people are taken as an index of the wealth of the State, and not as subjects of taxation; that, as to this matter, it was of no consequence by what name you called your people, whether by that of freemen or of slaves; that in some countries the laboring poor are called freemen, in others they are called slaves; but that the difference as to the State was imaginary only. \* \* \* Certainly five hundred freemen produce no more profits, no greater surplus for the payment of taxes, than five hundred slaves. \* \* \* Suppose, by an extraordinary operation of nature or law, one half the laborers of a State could, in the course of one night, be transformed into slaves, would the State be made the poorer or less able to pay taxes? That the condition of the laboring poor in most countries, that of the fisherman particularly of the Northern States, is as abject as that of slaves. It is the number of laborers which produces the surplus for taxation, and numbers indiscriminately, therefore, are the fair index of wealth." When these observations were made, it had not then been decided that taxation should be regulated by the same ratio as representation, but this circumstance does not weaken

the force of his argument in favor of allowing representation for all the slaves instead of three-fifths of their number. Population being "taken as an index of the wealth of the State," it being "of no consequence by what name you called your people, whether by that of freemen or of slaves"—"five hundred freemen, producing no more profits, no greater surplus for the payment of taxes, than five hundred slaves," why should not the Southern States have been allowed representation for all their slaves? Slaves are employed almost entirely in agriculture, and the people of Massachusetts can hardly believe that three white laborers engaged upon a Massachusetts farm can or do produce agricultural products, equal in exchangeable value, with the amount of agricultural products made by the labor of five slaves employed in the culture of cotton, hemp, or tobacco. Look to the exports of the United States for the last fifty years, and see how large a proportion was the product of the Southern slave labor. The imports have been paid for by the exports of the country.\*

It has been contended that slaves are *property*, and therefore entitled to representation not more than any other kind of property. If the Northern people consider them only in the light of *property*, and not as persons, why do they manifest so much concern and sympathy? Their zeal in favor of abolition shows that they recognize slaves as *people* also, and why not then allow them to be represented as people? If the Southern States had not slave-laborers, they would have an equal, if not a larger number of free laborers, all of whom, according to the Constitution, would be entitled to representation in the House of Representatives. In the slave-holding States, the slaves cultivate the soil and render services similar to those rendered by the free white laborers in other States. "A slave may indeed, (said Mr. John Adams,) from the custom of speech, be more properly called the wealth of his employer; but as to the *State*, both are equally its wealth, and should therefore equally add to the quota of its tax." And why then should they not add equally to the quota of its representation?

In the Report made to the Legislature of Massachusetts by John Adams' grandson, Charles F. Adams, it is alleged, that as representation of three-fifths of the slaves was conceded by the Federal Convention, in consideration of the slave-holding States paying direct taxes in the same ratio, and as the government has rarely resorted to direct taxation, the Southern States ought not to possess the right of slave representation without the burden of direct taxation; that while the latter has been occasional only, the former has been enduring. Do not the Southern States consume imported articles in proportion to their gross population? We are confident that such is the case, and if so, do they not pay more revenue by indirect than they would be required to pay by direct taxation? Southern men have advocated direct taxation in lieu of the tariff system, as a means of avoiding excessive

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\*In 1837, the exports of cotton, tobacco and rice from the U. S. amounted in value to \$71,345,028; and the remainder of domestic exports to \$24,219,386. The exports of cotton, tobacco, and rice in 1838, amounted to \$70,670,649 in value; and all other articles of domestic export to \$25,363,242. In 1839, the exports of cotton, tobacco, and rice were 73 1-2 millions of dollars, and the residue of the domestic exports 30 millions. The exports of cotton, tobacco, and rice in 1840 were 74 1-2 millions of dollars; and the other articles of domestic export 39 millions. In 1841, the exports of cotton, tobacco, and rice were nearly 69 millions; and the remainder of domestic exports 37 1-2 millions. The exports of cotton, tobacco, and rice for the 9 months commencing 1st October, 1842, and ending 30th June, 1843, were \$55,396,611; and the other articles of domestic export were of the value of \$22,397,173. (See Reports of the Secretary of the Treasury on the commerce and Navigation of the U. S.) Cotton, tobacco, and rice have been and are now the great elements of our commercial prosperity. They strengthen the bonds of peace and give an impulse to the civilization and improvement of mankind.



and unequal burdens, but we believe they have rarely, if ever, been cheered by the voice, or sustained by the votes of Northern politicians. We venture to assert, that the Northern people will never propose *bona fide*, that the Federal Government should abandon the indirect system of the tariff, for any plan of direct taxation, which the wit of man can possibly devise. The North has too large a fund of sagacity to originate or support any scheme of the kind. The omission of the Federal Government to resort constantly to direct taxes, is in perfect harmony with the wishes of the Massachusetts Convention which ratified the Constitution. So averse were the members of that Convention to the imposition of direct taxes by Congress, that they submitted a proposition to amend the Constitution, and prohibit Congress from laying direct taxes until "the moneys arising from the *impost* and excises are insufficient for the public exigencies." The Federal Government has pursued the policy recommended by Massachusetts, and her citizens, while opposed now to any change of the system of taxation, are complaining as though the Constitution was responsible, instead of the Federal Government.

Judge Story thinks the slave-holding States enjoy a great advantage in the exemption of *two-fifths* of the slaves from federal taxation. If *none* of the slaves were counted in ascertaining the number of representatives to which the slave-holding States are entitled, these States would have fewer representatives, and, as a necessary consequence, would contribute less in the way of *direct* taxation. The representation of the slave-holding States would be decreased, and their direct taxes decreased in the same proportion. Such would be the result, so long as taxation is proportioned to representation, as required by the Constitution. That instrument provides the same rule for representation, as for contribution—it recognizes slaves as persons as well as property—and whether considered as persons or property, or partaking of the character of both, the South is entitled to representation for them.

We refer to the 54th number of the Federalist, in which this provision of the Constitution is discussed. The writer denies "the fact, that slaves are considered merely as property, and in no respect whatever as persons.—The true state of the case is, that they partake of both these qualities; being considered by our laws, in some respects, as persons, and in other respects as property." The writer thus continues: "It is agreed on all sides, that numbers, (meaning gross numbers, the bond and free,) are the best scale of wealth and taxation, as they are the only proper scale of representation.—Would the Convention have been impartial or consistent, if they had rejected the slaves from the list of inhabitants, when the shares of representation were to be calculated; and inserted them on the lists, when the tariff of contributions was to be adjusted? Could it be reasonably expected, that the Southern States would concur in a system, which considered their slaves in some degree as men, when burdens were to be imposed, but refused to consider them in the same light, when advantages were to be conferred?" In the sequel of the same essay, it is said: "After all, may not another ground be taken on which this article of the Constitution will admit of a still more ready defence? We have hitherto proceeded on the idea, that representation related to persons only, and not at all to property. But is it a just idea? Government is instituted *no less for protection of the property*, than of the persons of individuals. The one, as well as the other, therefore may be considered as represented by those who are charged with the Government. In the Federal Constitution, the rights of property

are committed into the same hands, with the personal rights. Some attention ought, therefore, to be paid to property, in the choice of those hands."

No man knew more thoroughly the reasons which induced the Convention to adopt the various provisions of the Constitution, than Alexander Hamilton. Let us see what *he* said on the subject of this *federal number* in the Convention held in the State of New York, to decide the question of ratifying or rejecting the Federal Constitution.

"The first thing objected to, (said he,) is that clause which allows a representation for three-fifths of the *negroes*. Much has been said of the impropriety of representing men, who have no will of their own. Whether this be reasoning or declamation, I will not presume to say. It is the unfortunate situation of the Southern States to have a great part of their population, as well as property, in blacks. The regulations complained of, was one result of the spirit of accommodation which governed the Convention; and without this indulgence no union could possibly have been formed.—But, sir, considering some peculiar advantages which we derive from them, it is entirely just that they should be gratified. The Southern States possess certain staples, tobacco, rice, indigo, &c., which must be capital objects in treaties of commerce with foreign nations; and the advantages which they necessarily procure in those treaties, will be felt throughout all the States. But the justice of this plan will appear in another view. *The best writers on Government have held that representation should be compounded of persons and property.\** This rule has been adopted, as far as it could be, in the Constitution of New York. It will, however, by no means be admitted, that the slaves are considered altogether as *property*.—They are *men*, though degraded to the condition of slavery. They are *persons* known to the municipal laws of the States which they inhabit, as well as to the laws of nature. *But representation and taxation go together—and one uniform rule ought to apply to both.* Would it be just to compute these slaves in the assessment of taxes, and discard them from the estimate in the apportionment of representatives? Would it be just to impose a singular burden, without conferring some adequate advantage? Another circumstance ought to be considered. The rule we have been speaking of is a general rule, and applies to all the States. *Now, you have a great number of people in your State, which are not represented at all, and have no voice in your government;* these will be included in the enumeration—not two-fifths—nor three-fifths, *but the whole.* This proves that the advantages of the plan are not confined to the Southern States, but extend to other parts of the Union." (Elliot's Debates.) We see, then, that Alexander Hamilton maintained that the Southern States had as just a claim to representation for their slave labor as the Northern States had for their free labor. Let it be remembered that he had the independence to say this to the people of New York, almost all of whose day-laborers were free white men.

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\*As proof of this position of General Hamilton, we may refer, among others, to Burke, who, in his reflections on the French Revolution, uses the following language. "Nothing is a due and adequate representation of a State that does not represent its ability, as well as its property. But as ability is a vigorous and active principle, and as property is sluggish, inert, and timid, it never can be safe from the invasion of ability, unless it be, out of all proportion, predominant in the representation. It must be represented too in *great masses of accumulation, or it is not rightly protected.*" John Adams, the elder, in his defence of the American Constitution said, "The end to be aimed at in the formation of a representative assembly, seems to be the sense of the people, the public voice; the perfection of the portrait consists in its likeness. Numbers, or *property*, or *both*, should be the rule; and the proportion of electors and members an affair of calculation."

Renouncing the political principles, the conciliation and forbearance of the eminent patriots who framed the Constitution, John Quincy Adams arraigns the slave representation and condemns it as "repugnant to the first and vital principles of republican popular representation; to the self-evident truths proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence; to the letter and spirit of the Constitution of the United States, and to the liberties of the whole people of all the free States." It was said by a great statesman of the last century, that, if he could not give peace to his country, he would give peace to his conscience. We doubt whether Mr. Adams will give peace to either. It was reserved for him to make the discovery that the Federal Convention, in allowing the slaves to be represented, had, through gross ignorance or deliberate design, violated "the first and vital principles of republican popular representation." Were the members of the Federal Convention now living, they would be surprised to hear that so grave an indictment had been drawn up against them by an ex-President of the United States. They might smile at the delusion of the author, but in contemplating the wonderful results which have flowed from the operation of that Constitution which they created—in viewing the progress of the country, in population and power, wealth and renown, they could not fail to read their proud acquittal in the admiring eyes of millions of freemen. Invoking the continued blessings of Providence upon their country, and praying that the edifice which they reared with so much care and skill, might not be torn down by ruthless hands, they would await in cheerfulness their summons to another sphere of action, where their ears could never hear the disturbing voice of faction or fanaticism.

Experience, the best of political teachers, had so fully convinced the mind of Mr. Madison of the justice and wisdom of allowing representation for three-fifths of the slave population, that, in 1829, after this principle had been in practical operation more than forty years, in the Federal Councils, he recommended its incorporation into the amended Constitution of Virginia. He remarked that, "the rights of persons, and the rights of property are the objects, for the protection of which Government was instituted. These rights can not well be separated. The personal right to acquire property, which is a natural right, gives to property, when acquired, a right to protection as a social right. The essence of Government is power, and power lodged in human hands will ever be liable to abuse.

\* \* In Republics, the great danger is that the majority may not sufficiently respect the rights of the minority. \* \* \* \* \* The only effectual safeguard to the rights of the minority, must be laid in such a basis and structure of the Government itself as may afford, in a certain degree, directly or indirectly, a defensive authority in behalf of a minority having right on its side. To come more nearly to the subject before the Committee, viz: that peculiar feature in our community, which calls for a peculiar division in the basis of our Government, I mean the colored portion of our population. \* \* \* If we can incorporate that interest into the basis of our system, it will be the most *apposite and effectual security than can be devised*. Such an arrangement is recommended to me by many very important considerations. \* \* \* They are acted upon by our laws, and have an interest in our laws. They may be considered as making a part, though a degraded part of the families to which they belong. \* \* \* The Federal number, as it is called, is particularly recommended by its *simplicity, its certainty, its stability, and its permanency*. \* \* \* Whether, therefore, we be fixing a basis of represen-

tation for the one branch or the other of our Legislature, or for both, in a combination with other principles, the Federal ratio is a *favorite resource* with me. It entered into my earliest views of the subject, before this Convention was assembled; and though I have kept my mind open, have listened to every proposition which has been advanced, and given to them all a candid consideration, I must say, that in my judgment we shall *act wisely in preferring it* to others which have been brought before us." (Debates of the Virginia Convention of 1829, page 538.) Such were the views of one who scorned to act as the organ of faction, and who sought not to become the leader in agitation or mischief. Mr. Madison had supported the same principle in the Federal Convention of 1787, and the observations which he made, and the reflections in which he indulged during the succeeding forty odd years, tended only to confirm the opinions avowed and acted upon in earlier life.

If the slave representation was abolished, the spirit of innovation, a spirit particularly excitable in Republics, would not be arrested. The abrogation of one of the great compromises upon which the Constitution is based, would pave the way for the overthrow of another. Should the slave representation be withdrawn, the smaller and weaker States of the confederacy would have abundant cause for apprehending a diminution of their power. Their delegates in the Federal Convention insisted upon such an organization of the new Government as would allow the several States equality of representation on the floor of the Senate. This was required as a shield, by which the small States might protect themselves against unjust and unequal legislation. After a hard struggle, the more powerful States conceded claims, which, if refused, would have prevented the adoption of the Constitution. In 1840, the aggregate population of Rhode Island, Delaware, and Vermont was less than half a million of souls; while the aggregate population of New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio was more than five and a half millions. The six Senators representing less than half a million, exercise and possess in the Senate of the United States, powers as great as those of the six Senators representing nearly six millions. Such things are the result of the checks and balances of the Constitution. Those who idolize the doctrine, that the majority must at all times, and under all circumstances, rule the minority, may, at some distant day, agitate this question, and seek, by destroying the Constitution, to deprive the small States of the protection now afforded them.

John Quincy Adams, and his son, Charles F. Adams, have asserted, in their respective Reports, that the slave-holding States have exercised, and do still exercise, a disproportionate and preponderating influence in the national councils: that their citizens have too often been honored with the highest offices in the Government, and they conclude, that all these things are to be attributed to the representation of the slave population.

If the Southern States have exercised such a preponderating influence in any sense, the circumstance is to be accounted for, not by the existence of the slave representation, but by the greater prevalence of ambition and public spirit among such of her citizens as possessed leisure and wealth. Seventy years ago, Edmund Burke said before Parliament in his speech on conciliation with America, that the spirit of liberty was "more high and haughty" in the Southern than in the Northern colonies. "In Virginia and the Carolinas, they have a vast multitude of slaves. Where this is the case, in any part of the world, those who are free, are by far the most proud and jealous of their freedom. Freedom is to them not only an enjoyment,

but a kind of rank and privilege. Not seeing there that freedom, as in countries where it is a common blessing, and as broad and general as the air, may be united with much abject toil, with great misery, with all the exterior of servitude, liberty looks among them like something that is more noble and liberal. \* \* \* Such were all the ancient commonwealths—such were our Gothic ancestors—such in our days were the Poles; and such will be all masters of slaves who are not slaves themselves.” These remarks of Burke account for Southern influence more correctly than the logic of John Quincy Adams. This high estimate of liberty did exert an immense influence upon the character and intellect of the South, and prompted her sons to engage in the public service cheerfully and zealously. Their patriotism inspired confidence. The popularity which they acquired, and the high honors which they received, were the just and appropriate rewards of their devotion to the cause of Republican Government, and not the homage reluctantly paid to the slave representation.

The relative representation of the slave-holding and non slave-holding States in Congress, disproves the assertion of preponderating influence on the part of the South. The non-slave-holding States have now a majority of 47 in the House of Representatives, and by withdrawing the slave representation, the slave-holding States would lose 21 members, and thereby increase the majority of members from the free States to 68. In 1790 the Slave-holding States had 49 representatives out of 106: they now have 88 out of 223 members composing the House of Representatives. From 1790 to 1840 their representation in the lower house was diminished from 46 to 39 per cent of the whole number in the House of Representatives. The political power of the non-slave-holding States has greatly augmented, and that of the slave-holding States has declined during the last half a century. The census returns of each decade incontestibly prove the position. In the Senate, the slave-holding States once had 16 out of 30 Senators, or more than half; now they have 26 out of 52. The new States of Iowa and Florida are not embraced in these statements, and if included, would not change the views presented. In the face of these facts, the Southern States have been invited to concur in supporting an innovation, the immediate effect of which would be to deprive them of nearly one-fourth part of the political power which they now possess in one branch of Congress. *The relative number of members from the Southern States has diminished, and will probably continue to decline.* To maintain the position which they held on the floor of the House of Representatives in 1790, they ought to return 101 out of the 223 members of which the House is now composed. By the present apportionment, according to the three-fifth principle, the 88 members from the slave-holding States represent each 812,386 persons, and \$23,073,863 of capital, which is vested in agriculture, commerce, manufactures, trades, and the fisheries. If their whole population, slave as well as free, were represented, they would have 102 members. The 102 representatives from the slave States would each represent 71,109 persons, and \$19,906,862 of capital; the 135 representatives from the free States would then each represent 71,109 persons, and \$20,406,521 of capital.\* When the articles of Confederation were under discussion, John Adams observed, that “Reason, justice, and equality never had weight enough on the face of the earth to govern the councils of men. It is interest alone which does it, and it is interest alone which can be trusted, that therefore the interests, within doors,

\*Census Tables.

should be the mathematical representatives of the interests without doors." There is much force in these suggestions; and, according to them, the slave States ought to have 102 representatives, instead of 88 as at present, or 67 as implied in the proposition of Massachusetts.

The relative representation of the slave-holding States has diminished, and while this process of reduction has been steadily progressing, slavery has continued to recede further and further from Massachusetts. The greater the political power of the free States—the further that slavery recedes from Massachusetts, the more hostile she becomes to the institution, and the more prejudicial she esteems it to her interests and happiness. She came cheerfully into the Union and ratified the Constitution at a time when there were slaves in New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey; and Pennsylvania. In 1800, the slave population north of North Carolina was 55 per cent, and in 1840 it was reduced to 22 per cent—the fact exhibiting a great emigration of slaves from the North to the South. So long as slavery prevailed in the Northern States, Massachusetts said nothing against the slave representation, nor did she then oppose the recovery of fugitive slaves, but the Northern States having abolished slavery, and many of their citizens having, with their usual forethought and sagacity, sold their slaves to Southern planters, Massachusetts opened her eyes to all the horrors of the institution, and turned amazingly pious and philanthropic. As the alleged cause of evil receded, she thought the liability to injury was augmented, a rattle-snake being, in her opinion, more dangerous at the distance of one mile than one foot. To the nasal organs of Massachusetts, the odor of a slave is offensive in the ratio of the distance to which he is removed beyond her territorial limits.

The number of slaves in the United States in 1790, was 697,897; in 1840 it was 2,487,355; the proportion between the two periods being 1 to 3.56. During the same period, the white population increased from 3,172,464 to 14,189,705: proportion 1 to 4.47. From 1790 to 1840, the slave population, so far from having increased unduly has diminished, in its relative proportions to the whites, from 17.76 per cent in '90 to 14.58 per cent in '40. The white population increased more rapidly than the slave, not only when the *whole Union* was regarded; but a comparison of the census returns of 1830 with those of 1840 will show that this was the case, in the *slave States alone*, during the ten years intervening. The slave population has diminished in its relative proportion to the free population—the slaves have been gradually removed from the Northern States to a more congenial climate,\* and the relative political power of the free States has steadily advanced for the last fifty years. Weighing these facts separately or collectively, Massachusetts has no cause to apprehend any danger from the institution of slavery.

The Constitution declares that "Representatives and direct taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective numbers, which shall be determined by adding to their whole number of free persons, including those bound to service for a term of years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three-fifths of

\*From 1830 to 1840, the slave population of Maryland declined 13,257 in number, and the slave population of Virginia 20,770. During the same period, the slave population of Mississippi increased 129,552, and the slaves of Alabama 135,983. While the slaves of Kentucky, for that decade, increased 17,045, the slaves of Louisiana increased 58,864.

all other persons." Every tyro in politics knows, that the expression, "three fifths of all other persons," has reference only to the slave population.

This language was used by the Convention out of respect for the fastidious scruples of some of the Northern members, who expressed a desire, that slaves should not be mentioned *eo nomine*. In the Convention of North Carolina, Mr. Iredell said, "Though the word *slave* be not mentioned, this is the meaning of it. The Northern delegates, owing to their peculiar scruples on the subject of slavery, did not choose the word *slave* to be mentioned." Judge Story, in his Commentaries, admits that "it was agreed that slaves should be represented under the *mild appellation* of 'other persons.'" With all these things, John Quincy Adams is perfectly familiar, yet he and Mr. Giddings laid before Congress a Report, in which they observe, that "it is a grave and gratuitous error to assume that the Constitution acknowledges slaves to be property." They deny that there "is one word in the Constitution recognizing the right of property in persons." The Constitution provides, that "No person held to service or *labor* in one State under the law, thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor; but shall be delivered up on the claim of the party, to whom such service or labor may be due." Did the Federal Convention intend by this provision to divest freemen of their liberty, and permit them to be seized and delivered up to render "service or labor?" Surely John Quincy Adams will not have the hardihood to maintain the affirmative. He knows, and knows thoroughly, that by this clause the Convention designed that slaves shall not be "discharged," but "shall be delivered up" to their masters. No intelligent and unprejudiced mind can, for one moment, doubt that this provision was inserted in the Constitution solely to enable the people of the slaveholding States to reclaim their fugitive slaves when they escape into other States, where slavery does not exist. Such was the interpretation given contemporaneously by the authors of the Constitution; such is the interpretation arising from a review of the circumstances which induced the Convention to introduce the clause, and such is the only construction warranted by its language. In the Convention of Virginia, when this particular provision was under consideration, Mr. Madison observed, that the clause "was expressly inserted to enable owners of slaves to reclaim them." He availed himself of that occasion to make the following remark, which we, by the way, take leave to commend to the special attention of the people of Massachusetts. "No power is given to the General Government to *interfere* with respect to the property in slaves now held by the States."—*Elliot's Debates*, 3rd vol.

Messrs. Adams and Giddings maintain that the slave representation is repugnant to the "self-evident truths" proclaimed in the Declaration of Independence, and should therefore be abolished. The Declaration is not a treatise on the subject of representation, and it does not prescribe what shall be regarded in fixing the basis of representation for independent and sovereign States; associated, like ours, in a confederated Republic. Had Messrs. Adams and Giddings asserted that the *existence* of slavery in the several States was repugnant to the principles of the Declaration of Independence, the observation would not have merited notice, but we are not able to perceive what the question of the basis of representation has to do with the rights of man in a state of nature. The natural rights of man may be admitted, but when men abandon a state of nature, unite in society and resolve to organize a government, the question of representation arises, not as a question of natural right, but as a political problem, to be determined by

a variety of circumstances.\* If all men are by nature equally free, it does not prove that all are therefore entitled to equal political power. It would be unreasonable to expect that rights, resulting from and recognized by Government, should be controlled by abstract principles, applicable to a state of things existing anterior to the formation of government. The right of representation is no more a natural right than the right of suffrage. The friends of what is called universal suffrage, those who talk longest and loudest in favor of natural rights, when they come to apply their principles take care to prohibit females, minors, paupers and convicts from exercising the right of suffrage. Political rights exist, not in a state of nature, but when governments have been instituted. The members of the Federal Convention were not ignorant of the Declaration of Independence and its principles, but they felt themselves under no obligation and had no authority to carry out those principles to their fullest extent. It is proposed to abolish the slave representation upon the ground, that it is repugnant to the self-evident truths of the Declaration of Independence. By what process of reasoning can it be demonstrated, that the representation of none of the slaves will be less repugnant to the same truths? It is not more consonant with the self-evident truths, to a *llowa* qualified representation for 2½ millions of slaves, than to withhold representation entirely? If the representation of three-fifths favors the implication that the slave is divested of two-fifths of the freeman, the withdrawal of representation, far from elevating the slave, would have the opposite effect. Denying as Messrs. Adams and Giddings do, that the Constitution acknowledges slaves to be property, conceding, as all must, that slaves are persons, it would seem, that upon the very principles assumed by Messrs. A. and G., they ought to advocate such a change of the Constitution, as would afford representation for the *whole* number of slaves, instead of seeking to withdraw the qualified representation now existing.

If the slaves suffer, in any way, in consequence of three-fifths of their number being represented; the denial of representation will not elevate or improve their condition. The refusal of representation for them, or the continuance of the existing arrangement, will not disturb those self-evident truths, for which Messrs. Adams and Giddings profess a veneration so sudden and superlative. The withdrawal of the slave representation would increase agitation, and subject the Southern people to another and undeserved imputation. The abolitionists would ascribe the act to a desire to

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\* The inimitable Don Quixote was not more enamored with knighterrantry, than John Quincy Adams professes to be with the abstract truths of the Declaration of Independence. "If the question was asked (see his Report against the slave representation) as it was asked, how a people holding slaves could issue such a Declaration? The answer of reason and of friendship was, the Declaration itself is the abolition of slavery."

If so, why evince so much concern for the blacks?

The Boston Gazette of July '76 published the Declaration of Independence, and in the same paper, a "stout healthy negro man, about 25 years of age," was advertised for sale, and the Printer referred to for information. The Continental Journal of Boston published advertisements offering slaves for sale in 1780, four years after the promulgation of the Declaration of Independence.

The Declaration of Rights, adopted by Massachusetts in March 1780, declares that "all men are *born free and equal*, and have certain essential, and inalienable rights," &c. What was the commentary upon the text? By her Constitution of 1780, Massachusetts limited the right of suffrage to persons owning a freehold estate worth \$10 a year, or property to the value of \$200. Probably one-third of her adult male population was thus denied the right of suffrage. This Constitution was continued forty years, in opposition to her own Bill of Rights, which proclaimed that "all men were born free and *equal*." Could Mr. Adams discover no discrepancy between the precept inculcated and the practice pursued by Massachusetts? As Massachusetts held the doctrine of equal rights, will he explain why she, in 1786, prohibited the intermarriage of white persons and negroes under a penalty of fifty pounds. ●



degrade the slaves still more. They would then exclaim, "formerly you considered slaves as inferior to freemen, but in establishing the government you recognized them as human beings, as well as property, and you allowed representation for more than half of their number; instead of advancing, you have retreated, and by withdrawing the representation heretofore existing; you have omitted to have them recognized in the Constitution as persons entitled to representation, and by that omission have manifested a determination to regard them in no other light than as mere property."—Such is the language which the abolitionists would probably use for the twofold purpose of exciting ill-will against the slave-holder and sympathy for the slave.

We are told, by Messrs. Adams and Giddings, that the slave representation must be abandoned, because it is repugnant "*to the liberties of the whole people of all the free States!*" So self-evident did they deem this proposition, that they declined any argument in its support. *Parturiunt montes, nascitur ridiculus mus.* The liberties of the people of the free States being now in imminent peril, owing to the slave representation; Messrs. Adams and Giddings believe, that the said liberties can be effectually secured in no other way than by refusing representation for a class of people, the most of whom are living hundreds of miles distant from the free States! The representation of a large portion of our population, from the organization of the government down to the present day, in obedience to one of the plainest provisions of the Constitution, in compliance with the national expectation and the national will, during all the vicissitudes of time and of party, must now be dispensed with altogether, because, after a lapse of more than half a century, it has been discovered that the power which has been thus exercised, is repugnant to the liberties of the people of the free States. The "self-evident truths"—"the letter and spirit of the Constitution"—"the first and vital principles of representation," and "the liberties of the people of the free States" to be thus shamefully outraged for nearly sixty years, and no one to know any thing about this alarming posture of affairs, until Messrs. Adams and Giddings, boiling over with patriotism and philanthropy, condescended to enlighten the public mind and thereby rescue the Republic! How can the country forget such benefactors as these? In what manner adequately evince its gratitude?

We supposed, when looking over the elaborate Report made by Messrs. Adams and Giddings, that they would not have ventured to recommend to Congress so great and radical an innovation upon the Constitution, without being able to assign some reasons which would furnish to ourselves and to posterity a tolerable excuse for tearing down one of the main pillars of that temple, which was consecrated by the good and the wise, to the permanent union of these States. The reasons assigned are sophistical and unsatisfactory. They refer to no real grievance, which the experience and observation of an inquisitive and sagacious people, sensitive in respect to wrong, have enabled them to point out. The reasons given were such, as Messrs. Adams and Gidding flattered themselves, would suffice as a decent veil to conceal ulterior designs. There are many passages in the report, which prove incontestibly, that it had its origin in a distempered philanthropy in behalf of the African race, and a desire to interfere improperly and unjustly with the reserved rights of the States. If not influenced by such feelings, why did they attempt to prove that slavery was condemned by the Christian religion? and why use the following language? "Why is it, that Virginia, with her foot upon the neck of a tyrant, and calling upon all

mankind to follow her example, should not, with her own hand, break the galling fetters of her own slaves, and cast them away forever? By this proposition of Massachusetts, she invites her sister Commonwealth thus, *by abolishing slavery*, to emancipate herself. She says, in substance, to her, make your slaves free, and you shall have eighteen votes in the Representative Hall. \* \* \* You can accept this proposal without even impairing the right of property, which your wealthy planters claim in their slaves. Make them free, as Pennsylvania and New York have done. \* \* \*

Allow them the blessings of connubial union; of parental and filial affection. Class them no longer with the brutes that perish, or with inanimate matter, insensible to human suffering. \* \* \*

So shall you no longer have in prospect, rapidly approaching upon you, an exterminating war, in which the Almighty has no attribute that can take your side." It is here avowed, that the abolition of slavery is the end contemplated by Massachusetts in her effort to destroy the slave representation. The views shadowed forth by the son, are openly proclaimed by the father. The abolition of the slave representation was intended to be used as the lever of Archimedes. "By this proposition of the Legislature of Massachusetts, she invites her sister Commonwealth thus, *by abolishing slavery*, to emancipate herself." When Virginia needs the advice of Massachusetts, it will be asked for, and until that period arrives, Massachusetts would act wisely by attending to her own concerns, and by endeavoring to acquire a more conciliatory temper and charitable spirit towards her sister States, and by striving earnestly to "emancipate herself" from the pernicious influence of deluded agitators and visionary philanthropists. The "exterminating war" with which senile infatuation threatens Virginia, in the event of her refusal to accept the gratuitous advice of Massachusetts, will not be undertaken. "Break the galling fetters"—"class them no longer with the brutes that perish"—"allow them the blessings of connubial union, of parental and filial affection," are the terms used in describing Virginia slavery. Here is the madness of poetry without its inspiration, or its beauty. The description given is such as might be expected, not from a sober statesman, but a *quondam* professor of Rhetoric. The portrait exposes the bungling dauber, but the resemblance between the portrait and the original cannot be recognized.—When men of age, influence, and learning, who have filled the highest stations, and enjoyed admirable opportunities of acquiring correct information, allow their passions thus to obscure their perception of truth, or their hearts to become insensible to its high obligations, what can be expected from their friends and followers? It must be difficult, under such circumstances, to enlighten and convince the constituent body, when politicians thus shamefully abuse the high trusts committed to them.

The proposition of Massachusetts involves a change of the Constitution, so radical, and one so obnoxious to the slave-holding States, that they never will agree to it. The people of the slave-holding States are content to abide by the Constitution as it exists, in the sense in which it was ratified by the States, and the spirit in which it was received by the whole country. They desire not to impose additional obligations upon the other States, or to obtain additional rights for themselves. They find that the slave representation is clearly authorized by the Constitution; and hence they assert and maintain their right to the exercise of the power. They know that the powers not delegated are reserved to the States or people; that the powers granted to the Federal Government are defined, limited, and few in number; and they maintain, that the Federal Government has no constitutional

authority to interfere with slavery in the several States. In denying the constitutional right of the Federal Government to interfere with slavery in the different States, they have the concurrent testimony of the most illustrious men who have ever served in the public councils. They find, that in March, 1795, the House of Representatives adopted and entered upon its journal, the following resolution, reported by a select committee, composed with a single exception of Northern men.

*"Resolved, That Congress have no authority to interfere in the emancipation of slaves, or in the treatment of them in any of the States—it remaining with the several States alone to provide rules and regulations therein, which humanity and true policy may require."*

Among others who have expressed similar views, the Southern people recollect the emphatic words uttered by Mr. Daniel Webster in 1840. "I say, that standing here, (remarked Mr. W.,) in the capitol of Virginia, beneath an October sun, in the midst of this assemblage, before the entire country, and upon all the responsibility which belongs to me, I say, that there is no power, direct or indirect, in Congress or the General Government, to interfere, *in the slightest degree*, with the institutions of the South." Ten years before, in a speech which he made in reply to Mr. Hayne, of South Carolina, Mr. Webster used this language: "The domestic slavery of the South, I leave where I find it—in the hands of their own Governments. It is *their affair*, not mine." In 1840, he reiterated the sentiment, and added, "I hold that Congress is absolutely precluded from interfering in any manner, direct or indirect, with this, as with any other of the institutions of the South." The Southern people coincide with a distinguished son of Massachusetts in these opinions.

They concede that it is "the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances; but they contend that slavery is "their affair," and not a grievance to the North; that Congress has no right to legislate on the subject; that the citizens of the free States abuse and pervert the right of petition, and by invoking legislative action, are seeking to use the Government as an engine of agitation dangerous to the peace of the South, as well as to the perpetuity of the Union. Unless the Union itself be a grievance to the people of the non-slaveholding States, we do not see why they should complain of slavery, as they have necessarily no connexion with it, save through the provisions of the Constitution of the United States.

In ratifying the Constitution, the people of Massachusetts, as well as those of the other States, gave their assent to every part of the Constitution, and bound themselves to comply faithfully with all the obligations which it imposed upon them. The Massachusetts Convention declared that its members, "having impartially discussed and *fully considered* the Constitution," were willing to ratify the same, "acknowledging, with grateful hearts, the goodness of the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, in affording the people or the United States an opportunity, deliberately and peaceably, *without fraud or surprise*, of entering into an explicit and solemn compact with each other, by assenting to and ratifying a new Constitution, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, *insure domestic tranquility*," &c. No ratification could well have been more deliberate and solemn. If Massachusetts had changed her opinion of the Constitution, she has no right to expect other States to follow her example. Until the Constitution is altered, Massachusetts is bound to fulfil every duty which that instrument requires from her citizens. No new views of liberty, no feelings of phi-

lanthropy, no new scruples of religion, will constitute a legitimate defence for the direct or indirect violation of her plighted faith and honor.

In a speech delivered in the House of Representatives, in January 1840, by Mr. Slade, of Vermont, now Governor of that commonwealth, he used the following language. "On coming into the Union, the North made slavery in a sense its own—that is, to the extent of the express stipulation to which I have referred." Again, "in adopting the Constitution, the North entered into a stipulation to deliver up fugitives." We hope Mr. Slade will keep these truths in remembrance, and exert his energies in impressing them upon the minds of Northern men. The North certainly did enter "into a stipulation to deliver up fugitives," and that provision of the Federal Constitution received the *unanimous* support of the Federal Convention. In 1793, Congress, appreciating the duty of affording protection to the rights of the citizens of slave-holding States, passed a law to enable them to recover their fugitive slaves. The people of the non slaveholding States knew then and know now, that the Federal Government possesses the exclusive right to regulate the manner in which the "claim" of a master to his fugitive slave shall be made; and they know further, that all State legislation, which, directly or indirectly, limits or restrains the right of recovery of fugitive slaves on "claim" as defined and prescribed by the law of Congress, is utterly null and void. The Southern people, having the constitutional right to recover their fugitive slaves, and Congress having provided a method to enforce that right, it unquestionably became the duty of the non-slave-holding States to interpose no obstacle to the certain and prompt execution of a law emanating from a Government, the laws of which are the supreme law of the land. To prevent the enforcement of the law providing for the recovery of fugitive slaves, by clamor, menace, or violence, is to nullify an act passed in conformity with one of the plainest provisions of that Constitution, to which the non-slave-holding States have given their deliberate and well-considered assent. In substance, it is equivalent to saying, "it is true, that we citizens of the non-slave-holding States are bound by the Constitution and laws passed in pursuance thereof, to restore to you your fugitive slaves, but we believe slavery to be sinful, and therefore, we will not obey the requirements of the Constitution and laws in this regard, but should Congress pass any laws which will advance the interests of the North, you Southern men must not obstruct their enforcement, and if you do, we will denounce you, and urge Congress to pass a law coercing you into submission at the point of the bayonet. We will not incur the odium of nullification, by calling a State Convention, and passing an ordinance setting aside the law in relation to fugitive slaves, but we will accomplish the same end by restoring, to legal quibbles, mob ordinances and other expedients which we have often employed with entire success." With truth, might Mirabeau say, that words were things, for the history of the world affords many striking exemplifications.

In aiding and abetting the escape of fugitive slaves from time to time, the citizens of the non-slave-holding States thus engaged, have contemptuously disregarded the injunctions of the Constitution, violated the supreme law of the land, and manifested their want of respect for the rights of their Southern brethren. Not content with withholding their co-operation in enforcing the law of Congress, disdaining to be passive, citizens of the free States have again and again openly denounced the law, excited a spirit of opposition, and by clamor or force, evasion or fraud, sought to render it

perfectly inoperative.\* To aid a fugitive slave in making his escape is regarded as praiseworthy, to arrest him, criminal, by those, who unmindful of their constitutional obligations to others, are especially careful to see that those powers by which the Federal Government can benefit the North, shall be fully exercised and perseveringly maintained in despite of all opposition. No candid and intelligent citizen of the free States will deny, that the security of the rights of property is one of the most important objects for which government is instituted. That the Constitution, in authorizing the recovery of fugitive slaves, recognizes them as property, is equally true and incontrovertible. Respect for the rights of property, and perfect obedience to the laws designed to enforce those rights, are among the highest obligations of every American citizen. Religious scruples or speculative views of human rights afford no valid ground of opposition to the laws of the land, since men differ widely as to human rights and equally as to the true interpretation of the Bible. Anarchy, discord and revolution are the consequences of allowing each individual to obey or disobey the laws, according to his preception of right or wrong. Religion does not command us to bid defiance to the laws of the land, in order that individuals may test their theories of social happiness; nor does morality teach us that we do right when we deprive our fellow-citizens of that which the laws recognize as property. "Stranger, tell the Lacedæmonians, that we lie here, in obedience to their laws," was the brief inscription to commemorate the heroic devotion of Leonidas and his faithful band at Thermopylæ. Those gallant men had not only been obedient to the laws of their country, but the crowning act of their patriotism was, that they were obedient even unto death. Deeply do we regret, that the people of Massachusetts and other States are so little disposed to follow an example, which does honor to human nature and sheds lustre on the historic page.

Mr. Winthrop, of Massachusetts, recently observed in the House of Representatives, that "it would be well for us to have some remembrance of what were the opinions of our ancestors on this question of slavery." He was right. The opinion of our ancestors are not sufficiently heeded, and they should at all times command our respect. Our ancestors were intimately acquainted with the Bible, as well as the science of Government; they were as patriotic as any of their descendants, and not less devoted to Liberty; but being practical men, and not speculative philosophers, they thought it right and proper, that fugitive slaves should be surrendered up to their masters, and that the Slave-holding States should enjoy representation for three-fifths of their slave population continually. If, for avowing and carrying into effect these opinions, "our ancestors" were guilty of treason, then let their Massachusetts' descendants make the most of it.

Why, unless from the love of agitation and mischief, did Messrs. Adams and Giddings, in drawing up their Report upon the Massachusetts proposition, leave their designated path of duty, and attempt to prove, that slavery was condemned by the Christian Religion? They had been appointed members of a committee to consider a proposition for amending the Constitution in respect to representation. The question had no connexion with religion, and the House of Representatives had not directed the committee

\*The Committee of which Charles F. Adams was Chairman, introduced a bill prohibiting any justice of the peace, and any judge of a State court of Massachusetts, from granting a certificate in cases arising under the law of Congress, respecting fugitive slaves; and prohibiting, by a fine of \$1,000, all the sheriffs, constables, coroners, jailors, and other officers from arresting, or aiding in the arrest of any person claimed as a fugitive slave.

to enquire whether religion condemned or sanctioned slavery. Their views of this question were not asked by Congress nor desired by the country. They may have regarded themselves as the organs selected by the Almighty to expound his word and enlighten mankind as to sin and slavery, but if such a view were taken, the people of the United States would like to examine their credentials. When, before, in the history of our government, did the members of any committee of Congress ever submit a report in which an institution, pervading one half of the States of the Union, was gratuitously assailed and denounced for a supposed violation of the law of God?

With what consistency or grace John Quincy Adams could thus act, will appear by referring to the opinions which he published under his name in the *National Intelligencer* six years ago. He then said, "I am *not commissioned* to denounce the judgment of God upon those who differ from me in religious belief, whether upon the *slavery* question, or upon any other." At what period since, and by whom was he "commissioned to denounce judgment" against the slave-holders?

The Southern people claim, and will exercise the right to interpret the Bible for themselves, and they do not believe that slavery is prohibited by the Christian religion. "Both thy bondmen and bondmaids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are among you. Of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids. Moreover, of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which *they begot in your land, and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you to inherit them by possession. They shall be your bondmen for ever.*" —(Leviticus, chapter XXV.) Such were the words which "the Lord spake unto Moses in Mount Sinai." The passage evinces a confirmation of rights, similar in many respects to those appertaining to the inhabitants of the Southern States. The slaves were originally "of the heathen," their posterity was "begot in our land," and they have descended "as an inheritance." When Christ appeared on earth, slavery was very prevalent, and although he, on many occasions, warned mankind against sin and reprov'd sinners, we nowhere find him denouncing slavery as sinful. He saw it, left it to continue, and suffered it to spread over a new world. The Author of our religion came to suffer and to die, and in disseminating his doctrines, he dreaded no human censure or human punishment. The base motive of fear cannot be ascribed to a Being so exalted and so transcendently pure. Had he regarded slavery as sinful, it is but reasonable to infer, that he would have prohibited it in language too emphatic, too clear, too precise to allow cavil or justify disputation. Is it not the height of arrogance and presumption for mortals to meddle rashly and officiously with a subject from which the Saviour carefully abstained?

We are told that slavery is at war with the spirit of Christianity. If so then the abolitionists must believe that the Apostle Paul, who was one of the most eloquent and efficient advocates of Christianity that ever lived, was more ignorant of its spirit than themselves. In one of his epistles to the Ephesians, he says: "Servants be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart as to Christ. Not with eye-service as men-pleasers, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. With good will doing service as to the Lord and not as to men; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be

bond or free." A learned commentator, (Dr. Scott,) admits that the "servants at that time were slaves, the property of their masters." Archdeacon Paley, an opponent of slavery, but a learned theologian, said: "Slavery was a part of the civil constitution of most countries when Christianity appeared; yet no passage is found in the Scriptures by which it is condemned or prohibited."

Bancroft, of Massachusetts, the historian of our times, has remarked, that "slavery and the slave-trade are older than the records of human society." Slavery existed in Assyria and Babylon. The Pyramids of Egypt were reared by slave-labor. Ancient Carthage had slaves; and so had the Republics of Greece and Rome. The Grecian Republics had more slaves than freemen; and when the population of the Roman Empire was computed at 120 millions, one half of that number consisted of slaves. Negro slaves were known in Rome and Greece. The philosopher, Aristotle, one of the wisest ancients, was a zealous advocate of slavery. The inflexible Roman patriot, Cato, was a large slave-holder. In those ages which succeeded the downfall of the Roman Empire in the West, slaves constituted the most numerous class of society.\* Hallam remarks, that "in every age and country, until times comparatively recent, personal servitude appears to have been the lot of a large, perhaps the greater portion of mankind."

The people of Europe had engaged in the traffic of negro slaves some time before the discovery of America. Even in this day of civilization, slavery is by no means confined to this continent. The serfs of Russia are slaves, and Great Britain has millions of slaves under her control in the East Indies. A few years ago in a debate in the House of Commons, it was explicitly acknowledged, that "slavery prevails to a great extent in Bengal." In Africa, slavery has prevailed so long, that "the memory of man runneth not to the contrary." Park estimates that "the slaves of Africa are nearly in the proportion of three to one of freemen; and hired servants as altogether unknown." The habits, manners, social relations and systems of government in Africa, are those which characterize barbarians. Those brought hither were captives in war, and had no civil rights at home. They acquired none here; they came as bondsmen: their posterity were "begot in our land," and have become "our possession." Their removal from Africa to the United States, and their association with another and more cultivated race, have contributed greatly to their civilization, comfort and happiness. They left a continent enveloped in ignorance and superstition, and disgraced by unjustifiable wars, to inhabit another, where law and order, plenty and peace have generally prevailed. The rapid increase of their number in the United States, is a conclusive proof of the care and humanity with which they have been treated.†

Public opinion in the slave-holding States is decidedly hostile to every thing like cruelty towards the slave population. Their laws recognize slaves as persons entitled to protection, and while occupying a station below that of freemen, they are considered at the South in a light altogether different from that in which the abolitionists have with such persevering falsehood represented them. That the slaves are well fed, well clothed, and not required to perform an unreasonable amount of labor is well known, and the fact was cheerfully acknowledged by the British traveller Murray,

\*See Robertson.

†While the proportion of insane and idiots among the free colored people residing in the free States is one in every 143 persons, the proportion of insane and idiots among the colored free population and the slave population inclusive is 1 in every 1,605.

then a decided foe to the institution of slavery.\* We have the authority of a distinguished member of the House of Commons for the statement, (based upon official returns,) that the independent laborer of England is allowed only three ounces of meat *per week*. This is below the *daily* average allowance of meat to the slave laborers of the Southern States. The same gentleman has referred to authentic documents disclosing instances of children in the factories who were required to work "17 hours a day all the year round."† Nothing like this amount of labor has ever been, or is now, required of the slaves of this country. If the reports laid before Parliament by commissioners appointed by that body are to be believed, there are hundreds of thousands of operatives in the English factories subjected to a servitude far more appalling than any which has ever existed on this continent. Excessive labor and cruel discipline, a heated and impure air, insufficient and unpalatable food, vice and profligacy in their most degrading forms are the dismal characteristics of English factory life.‡ The operatives have not found liberty and happiness to be synonymous; they have discovered no magic power in liberty, whereby men can live without labor. "Political liberty," according to Montesquieu, "consists in security, or in the opinion the people have of their security." Let the English operative be judged by this standard, and what is his condition? Extreme poverty compels him to almost incessant toil, and uneducated as he is, he knows and feels that he has no security against an excess of labor, against ignorance, destitution, wretchedness. Utterly devoid of that sense of conscious security which gives value to political liberty, his happiness would be promoted by exchanging situations with the American slave. The imagination of the latter is not flattered by the idea, that he is a freeman, but he breathes on the soil of the planting States an atmosphere more pure than that of a crowded factory, he is less exposed to the contagion of vice, is required to labor less, receives a larger supply of nutritious food, and is exempt from all apprehensions of want during sickness, or of starvation in the evening of life. If a sense of security be taken as the criterion of political liberty, the negro of the Southern States is more of a freeman than the English operative.

With the operatives of Great Britain, the people of our country have no right, nor have they asserted any right, to interfere, although the English abolitionists have indicated an impertinent wish to regulate the domestic concerns of the slave-holding States. The condition of the English operatives has been referred to, as illustrating the fact, that political liberty does not imply individual comfort, or necessarily secure individual happiness. This truth needs no argument or illustration to convince the understanding of any considerate and sober man, and is overlooked by none except the abolitionists of Great Britain and the United States.

It may be said, that admitting the slaves of this country to be in a better situation than that of the English operatives, it by no means follows that the condition of the slaves here is not susceptible of amelioration. This is true,

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\*"It is a deplorable fact," (said the *Edinburg Review* of 1842,) "that the English agricultural poor, who have large families of very young children, live much better as beggars than they do as laborers." The same work states the number of beggars in England alone at 150,000.

†*Bulwer's England and the English*.

‡The children who are employed in the collieries of England, probably suffer more than the operatives in the factories. The *Westminster Review* for 1842, states that in the coal mines of Derbyshire, where children from 6 to 8 are engaged, "from 13 to 16 hours are considered a day's work; from 11 to 12 hours are reckoned three-quarter's of a day's work; and eight hours make half a day's work."



and the question arises, whose right and whose duty is it to provide for their comfort and happiness? The slaves do not belong to the Northern people, nor have the slave-holding States ever divested themselves of the right to control and regulate their own municipal concerns. The institution of slavery is one appertaining to the States in which it exists; in the language of Mr. Webster, it is emphatically "their affair." Heaven will not hold the descendants of the pilgrims and puritans responsible for the conduct of the Southern people, who, we trust, will, in due season, render a good account of their stewardship before the great searcher of hearts. The citizens of the slave-holding States are entitled to whatever advantages slavery may afford, and must submit to any evils which the system may entail upon them. Whether they ought to abolish slavery—at what time, and in what mode, are grave questions, which they, and they only, must decide. The abolition of slavery in the Northern States was an easy task, involving no risk of peace, and but slight loss of property, as the number of slaves in those States was not considerable. The Southern States are differently situated. They hold 2½ millions of slaves, valued at twelve hundred millions of dollars. The emancipation of these slaves would not only involve great pecuniary sacrifices, but cause commotion and bloodshed. When increased density of population shall have lowered wages, when the slaves become more improved and better qualified to enjoy freedom, when they have gradually emigrated to a warmer and more congenial part of this continent, emancipation may, and probably will ensue. In the mean time, it will become the citizens of the non-slave-holding States to abstain from agitating the immediate abolition of slavery. The continued discussion of this subject will tend to diminish the privileges now allowed to the slaves, besides endangering the friendly relations of the several States.

So far, the war waged against the institutions of the South has been one of denunciation. Were the abolitions to excite and conduct a crusade against the Southern States, it might be a bloody persecution, although not the first undertaken by men professing great devotion and philanthropy. Godfrey of Bouillon and the Christian warriors murdered forty thousand unresisting citizens at the storming of Jerusalem. Throwing aside their arms still streaming with blood, and wading ankle deep in human gore, they went with naked feet and uncovered heads to the Holy Sepulchre, and there offered their thanks to Heaven, and sung anthems in praise of the Saviour of the World. In Spain, during the reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, 10,000 persons were burned alive by the orders of the Inquisition, and 100,000 others subjected to gross indignities and unmerited punishment. Fifty thousand persons were destroyed in France at the massacre of St. Bartholomew. At a later period, when religion was contemned and ridiculed, liberty extolled, and human reason deified, more than a million of persons fell victims to the fury of the French Revolution. At different epochs, nations have laid aside their reason and conscience, turned away with scorn and contempt from the salutary lessons of experience, and surrendered themselves to the sway of unbridled passions. With nations, as with individuals, one deviation from rectitude prepares the mind and heart for other sins and enormities. The propensities of our nature are not easily restrained when once indulged; and hence the danger of yielding too readily to the spirit of innovation. Kings have their courtiers, and the sovereign people have theirs. Demagogues, fanatics, military chieftains—in short, all who intend mischief and misrule, profess to be governed by none other than the most liberal and philanthropic views. It was under the garb of

philanthropy that the spirit of innovation became the exciting cause of the French Revolution. "Who," said Segur, "could have anticipated the terrible flood of passions and crimes which was about to be let loose on the world, at a time when all writings, all thoughts, all actions seemed to have but one end, the extirpation of abuses, the propagation of virtue, *the relief of the people, the establishment of freedom*? It is thus that the most terrible convulsions are ushered into the world; the night is serene, the sunset fair, which precedes the fury of the tornado."

Nations, like individuals, are prone to strive after unattainable blessings, and by flattering this propensity of the human heart, the ambitious and unprincipled have often succeeded in raising storms which they subsequently endeavored in vain to arrest or control. Few were louder advocates of liberty and equality than Robespierre. If we judge him by his words, he appears to have been a patriot, but when judged by the unerring test of actions, the blood-thirsty tyrant stands out in bold relief. The history of the French Revolution demonstrates the power which an inconsiderable number of men may acquire when acting in concert and fired by enthusiasm. Such a body will accomplish less by argument and address than by intimidation. The large portion of the agitators who brought on the Revolution were destitute of property, and hence more inclined to become reckless. The great mass of the Parisian population had wives, children, and shops, and were friendly to gradual and moderate reform, but they permitted themselves to be overawed and overruled by the fanatical advocates of innovation. The agitators gained strength and influence from the apathy, the neutrality and timidity of the masses. Let such of the people of the free States as condemn the course of the abolitionists, profit by the lesson which those memorable times inculcate. Let all who are opposed to interference with the institutions of the South remember, that opinions, when zealously propagated, tend to diffusion; and that it is more easily to counteract dangerous doctrines when first promulgated, than to overthrow them when they have once obtained the ascendancy. Great is the responsibility which now rests upon the majority of the people inhabiting the free States. Let them remember that the abolitionists have increased to a number not to be disregarded, and acquired a power not to be despised, and that it is the duty of all Northern patriots no longer to submit in silence, nor indulge in neutrality, nor yield to sluggishness, but to arouse themselves and counteract the dissemination of doctrines, which, if made very prevalent throughout the free States, will render the Union "a rope of sand," and involve the country in civil war and its concomitant evils. The times require the development and exercise of that latent patriotism, which yet abides and abounds in the great majority of Northern hearts.

Perhaps the abolitionists are capable of being influenced by any argument which can be addressed to their understandings, or any appeal which may be made to their love of country. Heretofore they have treated with contempt and ridicule, all the admonitions and all the reasoning urged by Southern people, whose interests, the abolitionists assert, have warped their judgment and obscured their perceptions. Such objections can not be urged to weaken the force of any views of this subject, which may be presented to the abolitionists by the other citizens of the free States. Awakening from their lethargy, and animated by a true loyalty to their country, let them undertake and vigorously prosecute the great and noble work of disabusing the minds of their Northern fellow-citizens. Let them enlighten the abolitionists, in respect to their constitutional obligations, the character and ex-

tent of the powers confided to the Federal Government, the reserved rights of the States, and the disastrous consequences which must result from any interference with the rights of Southern property. Let these things be done faithfully and perseveringly, and the clouds which are beginning to darken our political horizon will disperse, confidence will be invigorated, harmony will be restored, and the bonds of the Union greatly strengthened.

All the great and beneficial changes made by Nature, are slowly developed; sudden changes are almost invariably succeeded by violent and injurious shocks. It is doubtless the will of Providence that nations should advance in civilization and happiness, and that the power of the people should augment as society improves; but all changes destined to be salutary or permanent, must be gradual and made with due circumspection.—The people of different nations have often suffered from the unchastened ambition of their rulers, but here where the popular will is so predominant, there is occasionally danger that the people will do mischief by giving too much latitude and indulgence to their own passions. The people do not always think correctly and act wisely. Like individuals, the masses are liable to be influenced and misled by error, fanaticism, sudden impulse, or love of power. So sensible of this were the Athenians, so much did they distrust themselves, that they punished the individual who proposed any thing against the established and fundamental law. Unnecessary as this precaution appears, it was probably productive of some good. There is great virtue in stability: it is an ornament of individual character, and can never bring dishonor upon a nation. The opposite quality has long been deemed the opprobrium of republican government. The desire of change sometimes degenerates into a feverish passion. Conventions have been called, and Constitutions framed; and before time had developed their defects or merits, they have been supplanted by others supposed to accord better with “the march of mind” and the latest fashion. Many act, as though they knew, beyond all controversy or doubt, that innovation and improvement are synonymous, and every change a reform. With such persons, theory is every thing, and experience of no earthly utility, except as a fit topic for the ridicule of the young, and the conversation of the aged. Some of these reformers think it just as easy to make a new Constitution, which will fit the body politic, as it is for the tailor to make a new coat to fit a dandy: and in some instances, there is not a very wide disparity between the lasting of the coat and the Constitution. When evils of magnitude really do exist, they should be remedied, if practicable, and while Constitutions should not be idolized, they should not be altered, until the experience and the calm and deliberate judgment of the people recommend such a course. Bad institutions are not worse than perpetual fluctuations; they unhinge the public mind, and create disorder throughout the great fabric of society. There is no unmixed good in human institutions, and we often find it better to “bear those ills we have, than fly to others that we know not of.”

Existing institutions have the advantage of being tried; and being known, they can be justly appreciated. As to the new ones, we are left to conjecture, and can not tell, with certainty, whether their effects will be beneficial or otherwise. Our hopes may be realized, or they may be doomed to disappointment.

———“Facilis descensus averni:

Noctes atque dies patet atri janua Ditis;

Sed revocare gradum, superasque evadere ad auras,

Hoc opus, hic labor est.”

M. De Tocqueville, in his work on American Democracy, expresses the opinion, that, during democratic ages, the ruling passion of men is the love of equality of conditions. The history of our country furnishes many facts which tend to sustain his position. "Democratic nations, (says this philosophical writer,) are at all times fond of equality, but there are certain epochs at which the passion they entertain for it, swells to the height of fury. Tell them not, that by this blind surrender of themselves to an exclusive passion, they risk their dearest interests: they are deaf. Show them not freedom escaping from their grasp, while they are looking another way: they are blind—or rather, they can discern but one sole object to be desired in the universe." Are the people of Massachusetts willing, in their pursuit of this equality of condition, to exhibit to the world an illustration of the truth of M. De Tocqueville's remark? or, acting more wisely, will they heed the warning long since conveyed to them by Addison in a few lines of his Cato?

"Let not a torrent of impetuous zeal  
Transport thee thus beyond the bounds of reason;  
True fortitude is seen in great exploits  
That justice warrants, and that wisdom guides;  
All else is towering frenzy and distraction."

The time was when a noble patriotism animated the statesmen and controlled the councils of Massachusetts. During the Revolution, her gallant sons won imperishable honors, and the citizens of that State may, with exultation and pride, contemplate the glories of Lexington and Bunker Hill. Prior to the Revolution, during its continuance, and for a time subsequent to the establishment of the Federal Government, Massachusetts exhibited a spirit deserving commendation and worthy of remembrance, but on sundry occasions since, her conduct, in reference to her federal relations, has subjected her to animadversion alike just and severe. She has no cause to exaggerate the influence of the slave representation, or to complain of the action of the General Government. The navigation laws passed by Congress, have fostered her shipping, and her ships, freighted with the varied products of her factories, now traverse every sea, and are found in every clime. Her fisheries have been protected by bounties,\* and her diversified manufactures have been cherished by a system of legislation, regarded by several other States as prejudicial to their interests, however beneficial to those of Massachusetts. Besides seeing two of her sons elevated to the highest honor known in this Republic, she has seen several others sent abroad on the most important foreign missions, and others presiding in the cabinet, or occupying seats on the bench of the highest judicial tribunal. Encouraged in all her industrial pursuits, participating largely in the distribution of official station and political honors, why should she complain of Southern institutions, and attempt to get up a crusade which would inevitably terminate in the extirpation of one or the other portion of the Southern population? Prosperity may have so intoxicated her, as to have impaired those fraternal feelings towards the other States which she evinced during the memorable period of the Revolution, but we trust that the comprehensive patriotism and enlightened public spirit which distinguished her in 1787, have not departed forever from her bosom. Let not Massachusetts deceive herself. The treacherous plaudits of English abolitionists, super-

\*In 1840, Massachusetts had a capital of eleven millions seven hundred thousand dollars, invested in the fisheries; and the whole amount of capital invested in like manner by all the other States, was four millions, seven hundred thousand dollars.

added to the huzzas of fanatics at home, can not impart to her a satisfaction more exquisite and enduring than that which she can derive from the consciousness of having fully and fairly complied with her obligations as a member of this Union. A patriotic and virtuous people will not exchange the solid satisfaction arising from the faithful performance of duty, for the evanescent pleasure of mere human applause.

Are a majority of the people of Massachusetts disposed to disregard the opinions, to renounce the principles of their fathers, and immolate the great work, at the suggestion of Utopian projectors, as impervious to reason as they are deaf to the lessons of experience? Have those of her citizens, who have presented the issue of the abolition of slavery or the dissolution of the Union,\* soberly considered the evils which, in all human probability, would result from the dissolution of the confederacy? Let them remember the advantages which Massachusetts has reaped and is still reaping from the Union. In comparing the present condition of that commonwealth with what it was sixty years ago, how can they fail to be struck with the contrast? Not only has Boston advanced with giant strides in population, wealth and refinement, but the territory of the State has become dotted over with beautiful towns and villages. From time to time, the ear is saluted by the cheering hum issuing from the numerous factories of an industrious and thrifty population, and the eye of the traveller beholds with delight the many glistening steeples which devotion and gratitude have reared to the glory and honor of Omnipotence. Owing to increased opulence, countless schools have been opened, many colleges have been founded and education thereby diffused. Homely dwellings have been superseded by gorgeous palaces, and the unostentatious dress of the pilgrim fathers has been exchanged for attire befitting the nobles of Venice when at the height of her renown. Rocky fields have been converted into enchanting gardens, perfumed by costly exotics, obtained through the instrumentality of a commerce varied in character, and profuse in its returns. If satiated with the pomp and disgusted with the vanities of the world, Massachusetts can easily renounce them, and resume the simple habits of the Puritans, without withdrawing from the confederacy, abolishing slavery, or the slave representation.

While pondering on a subject so momentous as that of the separation of these States, let the abolitionists glance over this vast empire, and think for a moment of the power and grandeur which it has attained under the operation of the present Government. The world has never exhibited so magnificent a spectacle of human happiness, industry, and progress. Improvements in the arts and sciences have corresponded with the rapid augmentation of wealth and population. Agriculture has been greatly extended; commerce and manufactures have been nurtured and developed; cities have sprung into existence; canals and railways have been constructed; and liberty, peace, religious toleration and general happiness have prevailed.

\*At the last session of Congress, John Quincy Adams presented a memorial, signed by William Garrison, Edmund Quincy, George Adams and many others, who say, that "deeming slave-holding a heinous sin, and convinced that slavery ought to be immediately and forever abolished, they look upon the Constitution of the United States as enjoining obligations and duties which are incompatible with allegiance to God, and with the enjoyment of freedom and of equal rights.

"In view of these facts, your memorialists, *disclaiming citizenship, and repudiating the present Constitution* as a 'covenant with death and an agreement with hell,' ask you to take immediate measures, by a National Convention, or otherwise, for dissolving the Union of these States."

Why, by dissolving the Union, terminate a connexion which exhibits results so gratifying, prospects so brilliant and so encouraging? Far, far better will it be for us all to heed the warning voice of that illustrious patriot and sage, who, in his Farewell Address, exhorted his countrymen to "cherish a cordial, habitual, and immovable attachment to the Union; watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest."

R. T. H.

VIRGINIA.

*R. J. Abar*